

**September 2021**



**Greetings from White Pine Wealth Management!**

Autumn is upon us here in New England. The trees have burst forth with their spectacular display and we're pulling out our slippers for the chillier mornings that have already set in. It's a season that many people consider the best time of year, with all the comfort food, cozy sweaters, and holiday gatherings. We're excited to share some of the things we do to [lean into the season](#) and maybe throw a little business in there, too.

**Them Apples...**



If you haven't visited the [Maine Pomological Society's website](#), we urge you to check it out. It has all sorts of interesting facts and tidbits about the "pome" that you can impress your friends with when you're apple picking. It will help you locate the apple orchards near you and maybe even inspire you to try your hand at growing a tree or two. And check out [these tips](#) for making applesauce that wows.

## Open Enrollment

Whether you're an employee, a retiree, or you're getting health insurance in the marketplace, open enrollment season is coming up. It's important to make sure you're getting everything you can out of your options.

- Many [employer-sponsored benefits packages](#) include inexpensive access to exam-free term life insurance, even for spouses of the covered employee. This is a great way to get group rates and avoid an exam. Typically, just an Evidence of Insurability form will be required.
- Did you know that contributions you make to a Health Savings Account (HSA) under a high-deductible plan can be used for [Long Term Care premiums](#) later on in life? The [money can be invested](#) once you've reached a certain threshold and the earnings are not taxed. It comes out of your paycheck tax-free, and as long as it's used on [qualified medical expenses](#), any expenditures come out tax-free, too.
- While we always recommend that clients have 3-6 months' worth of living expenses in cash in the bank to bridge any unforeseen events, you should still take a look at what your [coverage is for disability](#). If the company offers a base amount (60% of pay, for instance), you can boost that amount with your own short term disability supplement, often for very little in premiums.
- Don't forget to make sure you're contributing at least as much as the company match to your retirement plan. We recommend electing the Automatic Escalation feature if it's available. This increases your contribution by 1% annually, typically up to a specified percentage or dollar limit.
- If your company offers a [Roth 401k component](#), consider taking advantage of that option. While the contributions come out after taxes, the contribution limit is much higher than a regular Roth IRA *and* you are not subject to income limits.

If you're enrolling in the marketplace plans that are offered, the [enrollment period begins November 1<sup>st</sup>](#). If you're wondering whether the premiums are worth it, consider the [average cost of some of the most common surgeries](#). Medicare open enrollment begins October 15<sup>th</sup> and it can be overwhelming. The Southern Maine Agency on Aging offers a number of classes on this topic that you can attend. Just scroll through their [events page to find one of the many dates](#) that would work for you.

A form of insurance coverage that you may not find in any of these platforms is Long Term Care (LTC). [The cost of long term care](#) can be surprising to patients and their families and can be the difference between receiving help in the comfort of your home and going to a facility. Some people are carrying life insurance policies that are no longer as important to their financial picture as a Long Term Care policy might be. There are ways to convert those contracts to more appropriate coverage while retaining a death benefit for heirs if it's not used. And there is a [long term care sweet spot](#) for

purchasing this type of coverage. If you're between the ages of 55 and 65 and you're curious about how an LTC policy might work in your financial plan, let us know.

### Autumnal Splendor



Few natural events are as dramatic as the changing leaves in New England. We boast every color under the sun as the [foliage season unfolds](#) in spectacular form, blanketing our mountains, forests, and neighborhoods with unparalleled color. The Farmer's Almanac gives a pretty concise [schedule of events](#) around the country.

### **BOO!**

Sorry to [scare you](#). Even though it's a busy time of year around here, we still have time to grab a little [Witch's Brew](#) and settle in for a favorite Halloween flick. From movies to podcasts to costume ideas, here's a boo-tastic list of our team's best recommendations to put a little fright in your night.



Grey Terry:

[Blair Witch Project](#)

Paige Batchelder:

[Hocus Pocus](#)

[The Legend of Sleepy Hollow](#) (the book, preferably an old one, with a creaky binding)

Melissa Duffy:

[The Village](#)

[The Haunting of Hill House](#)

[Stroll Haunted Yarmouth](#)

“Stroll Haunted Yarmouth is a guided tour of the Baptist Cemetery by the Hillside Meeting House, one of the oldest buildings in town. In collaboration with the Yarmouth Historical Society, the Ghosts of Yarmouth’s past come to life to tell their tales near the plots where they now rest. Most tales are based in fact but embellished for theatrical effect. It is a fun evening out and very covid and family friendly since it is almost entirely outside. I highly recommend it!”

Teri Conley:

[Beetlejuice \(the movie\)](#)

[Beetlejuice \(the Broadway show\)](#)

Shana Bennett:

[Pet Sematary](#)

[The Control Group](#)

Mary Beth Malone:

[The Shining](#)

Matt Emery:

The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree! We love this picture of Matt’s son, Sam, at Halloween a few years ago. A future White Pine intern for sure!



Gibson Wilkes:



"I have never been a big fan of Halloween - masks unnerve me – so our family kept it super G-rated. While my mother was an expert seamstress, I am not. Each year our two daughters would pick out a [costume pattern](#) and I would do my best. We would carve our pumpkins, using very fancy tools and patterns, while listening to the same CD of Halloween songs which included [Monster Mash](#). We always ate spaghetti for dinner and Blake would take them out trick or treating. As soon as our kids were grown and out of the house we became "those people" who put out a bowl of candy and hid.

I will also confess to being obsessed with [giant pumpkins](#) and I always dragged my daughters (or anyone nearby) to the Cumberland County Fair to see the giant pumpkins on display."

**Happy Fall!**



If it's gourds and ghosts, or just some warm apple cider and a good book, we hope you will get the most out of this festive and cozy season. [Wherever your hayride](#) takes you this fall, White Pine Wealth Management is honored to help you get there.